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# O'Brien, Jadine oral history interview

Greg Beam

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## **Interview with Jadine O'Brien by Greg Beam**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

O'Brien, Jadine

### **Interviewer**

Beam, Greg

### **Date**

August 9, 2000

### **Place**

Portland, Maine

### **ID Number**

MOH 223

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### **Biographical Note**

Jadine (Raynes) O'Brien was born August 1931 in Whitman, Massachusetts. Her father, John Raynes, was in the chicken business. Her mother, Eunice Raynes, worked in a dress shop. Jadine worked in the same dress shop and put herself through school at Westbrook College in Maine. She was inspired by John Kennedy to get involved with politics and particularly, the Democratic Party, which she did with her husband Jack O'Brien. After college, she worked for Peter N. Kyros, Sr., then got involved in Portland city government and directed the Model Cities Program. Later, she ran for Congress against Peter Kyros in 1974 and lost, then went to work for the Center for Community Dental Health until 1979, when she went to work for Governor Joe Brennan as a member of his cabinet. Later, she worked for Blue Cross and Blue Shield. She has worked as a lobbyist for more than 16 years.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: family background; John Kennedy; registering voters with George Mitchell in Portland, Maine in the 1960s; George Mitchell; Model Cities, Portland, Maine; Portland West Advisory Committee; Charlie Allen; Peter Kyros; 1974 congressional campaign and the challenges she met as a woman; Joe Brennan; Ed Muskie; Jane Muskie; Democratic National Convention in 1968; Muskie's temper; Bill Hathaway; Angus King; Bob

Masterson; John O’Leary; David Flanagan; Independent Party; Blue Cross Blue Shield; and Henry Bourgeois with the Model Cities program in Lewiston, Maine.

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## **Transcript**

**Greg Beam:** The date is August 9th, 2000, it's about 1:45 P.M. This is Greg Beam and I'm here with Jadine O'Brien at her home in Portland, Maine. To begin, could you please state your full name and spell it?

**Jadine O'Brien:** Okay, it's Jadine Raynes O'Brien. J-A-D-I-N-E, Raynes, which was my maiden name, R-A-Y-N-E-S, O'Brien with an -E-.

**GB:** And when and where were you born?

**JO:** I was born in Whitman, Massachusetts. W-H-I-T-M-A-N, Massachusetts in August of 1931.

**GB:** And did you grow up there?

**JO:** I did, went to high school there.

**GB:** I see. And what were your parents' names?

**JO:** John and Eunice, E-U-N-I-C-E.

**GB:** And what were their occupations?

**JO:** My father was in the chicken business. He worked, we raised chickens. But he worked in a company that processed chickens, sold farm equipment, that kind of thing. Retail, kind of like a hardware store. My mother worked in a dress shop, as sales lady in the local dress shop, which is where I worked during college and put myself through college.

**GB:** I see, so was Whitman sort of a rural town?

**JO:** Very small town.

**GB:** Very small town.

**JO:** Very small town, yeah.

**GB:** How were your parents involved in the community in Whitman?

**JO:** My mother worked at the polls. My grandmother was a very, very active Republican, collected elephants and I have her elephant collection if you'd like to see it. I don't remember that neither of them ran for public office or were involved in that way.

**GB:** But they were both fairly strong Republicans?

**JO:** My mother was, you know, and I don't really know what my father was. But my mother was Republican.

**GB:** Did that rub off on you?

**JO:** Not particularly. Although the first time I ever voted for president I voted for Dwight D. Eisenhower, so it must have been a family background.

**GB:** Did you then enroll as a Republican at any time?

**JO:** I must have been at that point, yeah. We were on our honeymoon, as a matter of fact, and I voted absentee for Dwight David Eisenhower. It wasn't until John Kennedy came along that I decided that I really wanted to be a Democrat.

**GB:** I see, and where did you go to college?

**JO:** I went to Westbrook Junior College. It was then Westbrook Junior here in Portland, then became Westbrook College and now is part of the University of New England. I came here and graduated in '51 with a major in journalism. It's a two-year college, obviously.

**GB:** OK. So what brought you to Westbrook College, why were you looking at colleges in Maine?

**JO:** Small college, my family knew somebody whose daughter had come here. I came sight unseen, had never seen the campus, which of course nobody does today. I suppose it was a reasonable price, I mean we were of very modest means. I can't, I did look at a couple of other places I think, but had an interview in Boston when they traveled around obviously and ended up here, and have had a long, long relationship with that college.

**GB:** Oh, really?

**JO:** Well, I worked there ten years after (*unintelligible phrase*) in my career.

**GB:** Oh, okay. And so were you interested or involved in politics when you were in college or right after you graduated at all?

**JO:** No, no.

**GB:** So how did you became more interested (*unintelligible phrase*)?

**JO:** It was really John Kennedy. My husband and his family, because of that Irish-Catholic background coming from south Boston, were Democrats, had always been Democrats. And his father was in the post office so there was also that union Democratic (*aside relating to ringing telephone*). But as I say, as I watched it from a distance I just, I was taken like everybody else with my era I guess with John Kennedy and wrote a letter to him and said I wanted to be involved. And he said, get involved in your local Democratic committee which of course was here in Portland at that time, and that's what I did.

**GB:** I see, and so what was the Democratic community in Portland like at that time?

**JO:** Oh, it was very small. I mean they say, they old joke, and Jack may have told you that, you know, they could have caucused in a phone booth. And considering that Portland was a major city and has always been a Democratic city really, they weren't terribly active. Although I think there was more, I think party meant more in those days perhaps than it does today. There was the Democratic Women's Club and there were a number of events, and we became involved, you know, right at the grass roots. I mean, I went, one of my favorites is I went door to door registering voters with George Mitchell on Munjoy Hill, that was a long time ago. And, you know, we went to conventions and we were delegates. I served on the state committee, you know, all that being a party member was expected.

**GB:** I see. Let me back up for one second and ask you real quick, how did your mom react when she found out that you had registered as a Democrat?

**JO:** The only thing I can remember is when Kennedy was running, I think it was that summer. We always vacationed on Cape Cod, we spent the month of August. My mother and father and us rented a house together, which was a family kind of thing for the month of August. She decreed that summer that there would be no talk of politics at all. I mean, I suspect by then I was very fervent, you know, and she probably wasn't. So she just said we will not talk politics in this house for this summer, and we didn't.

**GB:** That's funny, that's funny. All right, so when you were trying to, when you were registering voters with George Mitchell, when was that?

**JO:** Oh, God, I knew you were going to ask questions like that.

**GB:** Ball park if you (*unintelligible phrase*).

**JO:** A long time, well, in my, I, it was in the sixties. I'm going to guess the early sixties. I mean, he was I presume an attorney then, you know, I mean he wasn't anybody. But I can

remember it was in a not too good section of town and he took one side of the street, I took the other and, you know, you'd go up these tenement stairs. I said to him, don't let me out of your sight, make sure I come out of these houses that I go into. So, I mean, he's been a good friend for a long time.

**GB:** Did he have, seem to have any inclination that he would go into politics himself at that time?

**JO:** I don't remember but not, he must have because I don't know why else he would have been in Portland, he didn't live in Portland. Well, I don't know what, but he must have had some inclination. I also was present in the State House the day that Joe Brennan named him to that senate seat. He was just wonderful. I mean, he answered questions of the press like he'd been serving in the congress for years. I mean, deep questions. They asked him about the Indian Lands Claim, I remember, and it rolled out of him. And I thought, he hasn't even been there yet, you know, he's just that bright kind of guy.

**GB:** So you think he was very prepared for it and he was kind of setting himself up?

**JO:** Oh, I think so. I think (*unintelligible phrase*) worked for Muskie. I mean, how could you not work for Senator Muskie all that time and not have some interest and inclination. I mean, you wouldn't have been in the job if you didn't, you know.

**GB:** I see. What was George Mitchell like personally?

**JO:** He's wonderful, I mean, I think he's a very insightful guy. I have a great picture of the two of us together which I treasure. I can remember when the Borque nomination was before the congress and I saw him someplace and I said, George, I don't want you voting for him. He said, how did I know that's what you were going to say to me? I mean he, you know, intuitively knew you, knew where you were coming from and so forth, just, I mean a fine gentleman, really.

**GB:** All right. So, who were some other major political figures in the Democratic Party or in general around Portland back in the early days when you first got involved?

**JO:** Okay, I'm sure Jack mentioned Dana Childs. He was, Dana and Jean were one of the first people we met. I took classes with Jean at the university, and Dana was at that point, well he wasn't speaker of the house but he'd been in the legislature because as you know he'd been a Republican and a Democrat. And he was an attorney, and there was a group of them: Ronnie Kellam, Casper Tevanian, Joe Brennan, that were the young people.

Well, not the real young people, the young Democrats that I remember at that time were people like Earle Shettleworth, the director of the Historic Preservation Commission; John O'Leary, who's now the ambassador to Chile; David Flanagan who's the CMP president. Those guys were high school and college kids when I began around here. David Flanagan and John O'Leary both worked with me when I worked for Peter Kyros, and they were both in college at the time. So that was the young breed, and then there was the Dana generation, if you will. Dick Poulos who just died, the bankruptcy judge, all of that kind of crowd was what I would call the, I

wouldn't call movers and shakers but they were the, you know, they were the active older members. The older, man, how old were they, for crying out loud.

**GB:** Did you know Harold Loring?

**JO:** I knew Harold Loring when he served on the Portland city council. When I worked for the city, Harold was a counsel so I knew him, like Charlie Allen. Tom Allen's dad Charlie served on the city council when I worked for the city of Portland, and there isn't a finer person in the city. I mean, Charlie Allen is just one my very special friends. He is elderly now and not well, but he's just a great guy. I had a nice note from Tom when I retired from my job and he said that I had been his father's favorite congressional candidate until Tom ran for congress, which I thought was awfully nice of Tom.

**GB:** That's great. So were these people fairly, you know, they were instrumental in Portland city government at that time?

**JO:** Yeah, give you another name out of that generation, Bob Dunfey. You know, Bob and his family owned at that Eastland Hotel and Bob was very active. You know, and Harold Pachios, although he was working in Washington most of that time. There was that whole cadre of people, you know. If I thought about it I could probably think of a lot more names.

**GB:** Well what was the city of Portland like at that time socially or economically or politically?

**JO:** It was just beginning, when I worked for the city, and that was in '70 to '74, it was just beginning that whole rebirth. I mean, the Old Port wasn't there. If you walked, from City Hall, if you walked down Exchange Street, I worked at City Hall, there might have been one or two shops. A guy named Ouellette opened a candle shop, which was like the first shop there. Very much a working waterfront, nothing else on the waterfront except cheap bars and dives and that kind of thing. And so just no Old Port.

John Menario was the city manager at the time and I have great respect for John Menario. I think he did wonderful things for the city, he was a great guy to work for. Went on to run the Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce, ran for governor as an independent which was unfortunate. I think if he'd been a Democrat, you know, city managers always think they can be independent for some reason. And now, of course, he's at People's Bank.

But he and some of the councilors at that time: Harold Loring, Ralph Amergian, Charlie Allen, Dr. (name), I think, and John in particular, and there were some leaders, somebody like Bob Masterton who was at Maine Savings Bank, some of those business leaders, really saw, I think, had a vision for Portland if you will, and saw what it could be. And so you think of where it's come from, from those days, which would have been thirty years ago.

**GB:** And so do you think what, what we have today in Portland is kind of what they envisioned?



**JO:** I don't think they even thought it would go that far, but yeah, I mean, I think they were on that track certainly. You know, and John's still around and still active in all the right things.

**GB:** So you said you were working for the city '70 to '74, what were you doing?

**JO:** I directed the Model Cities program.

**GB:** Okay, that's when you, I knew, your husband told me that you had directed the program, I wasn't sure what years that was. So what did that entail?

**JO:** Well I went in, Caroline Glassman, who was a local attorney at the time and of course has been on the court since then, was hired by the city to plan, to do the first year's planning. And then when she left I came in and I came in as a, I don't know, I did the health task force and the recreation task force. Then I became the assistant director and eventually the director.

Portland was one of two cities in Maine chosen to do the Model Cities program. This was a federal grant, a lot of money, a lot, I mean those were the heydays. I'm talking thirty million dollars to improve the lives of the poor people in Portland. It was unique for us, the other one was Lewiston and Henry Bourgeois ran that program, he's now head of the Maine Development Foundation.

It was unique for us in one way because we had no blacks and the program indeed was primarily directed at poor black communities. Because the feds would come and visit and look at me and look around at my staff and say, where are your black staff members? And I'd say, got less than one percent of blacks in the city of Portland, you want to find them for me, you know, we'll hire them.

But Portland has always had a reputation as being a city to sample things in. If you had a new product and wanted to market it, Portland might be one of the places where you'd come and try to sell that product or give that product away. So from that point of view we've always been kind of a cosmopolitan city. And of course we had Democrats and Muskie in control of where some of that money's going to go.

I think we did a very good job with that program, I mean we ran it, first of all we did it on time. We finished, it was a five-year program, we finished on time. We did it with no hint of scandal or fraud or abuse, which many other cities faced when given all that kind of money. And I think traces of it are still out there, some of the stuff that we did. We put a lot into child care and many of those child care centers are still functioning; into health clinics; into recreation programs that are, you know, still going around. I served eventually on the national board. And to say it was a black program, I was the only woman on the board and the only white on the board. They were all black men and me.

**GB:** How many people were there on the board?

**JO:** Oh, God, I'm going to guess there were twenty maybe. And the next year when I ran for reelection I lost to a Chicano who wanted to be on the board, too, you know, to have a diverse

board at that time. They were just, I mean, I, obviously it was an experience for me imagine coming from Maine. I had been a strong feminist, I could hold my own in terms of being the only woman because I had been the only woman in city department handed a few other things. But they were wonderful dressers, I mean, they'd go out in the evening in their dashikis and their purses and limousines and champagne, oh-oh-oh, they lived. So, it was a great experience.

But I do think, here in Portland, I think I was perturbed with, Dick Gephardt at one point was here campaigning for somebody and said he didn't think the program had been very successful. Didn't know I was in the audience. And I said to him afterwards that I thought he was mistaken, that if he had done his homework, I think Portland was a very successful program.

**GB:** So, I don't know if it came down from the federal level or how much was, well tell me that, how much was planned on the federal level and how much was kind of left up to you?

**JO:** It was all federal money, came down from the feds, came to us. There was an ad-, you had to have an advisory committee, it was called the Portland West Advisory Committee, and it had to be made up of representatives of the low-income population if you will. So there were community leaders, I mean, we had a priest at one time, we had a nun at one time, we had a physician. Jerry Conley, Sr. chaired that at one point when he was a state senator. And then we had low-income people who were not used to going to meetings and negotiating or whatever.

Anyhow, we had, we, you'd put out requests and you'd get all kinds of requests for money. I mean hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars requested, five times more money than we ever had to give out. And then of course the advisory committee would make their recommendation and it would go to city council for the ultimate decision on who got that money. We had a sit-in and we had a couple of pickets. I mean there was, as there would be today, that, radical's a little too strong a word, but that group of people representing low-income citizens that didn't like what we did. I mean they wanted either more money or they wanted it done in a different way. So there was that element there, but not nearly what it must have been in other cities where they had real strong black influence, if you will.

**GB:** I see. How many cities were there across the nation that (*unintelligible phrase*)?

**JO:** I don't know that. Every state had at least one program.

**GB:** Oh, really?

**JO:** But I, I may have remembered at the time but I don't remember now. You had to file a big plan, you know, with the feds. I mean, our plan, our book looked like this, (*unintelligible phrase*).

**GB:** Okay, so did you, that's what I was kind of wondering. Did you have I guess administrators or someone at the federal level checking on your program, making sure that it was consistent with the original goals?

**JO:** Yeah, we did, because they came and visited, you know, I mean they'd do audits. You

had a financial audit and then they came to observe. I mean, I can remember them coming, I don't remember them staying them long. I remember taking them down to DeMillo's and giving them lobster and they'd go home. But, yeah, there was some, obviously some oversight. But we used to say every year when we filed this big plan that in the middle of it we were only, either going to put blank pages or dirty jokes to see if anybody really ever read the whole damn plan, you know. I mean it was hundreds of pages long.

But we took it very seriously. I had a staff of probably twenty-five, thirty people at that time. And the city, I mean the city of Portland benefited from it in many ways. I mean, we paid and bought a lot of stuff that would not have ordinarily been in a city budget, you know, so it was kind of the extras. There was some concern that they didn't want a, the city council didn't want to fund programs out into the future for which they would be responsible at a later date. I mean, I think that's still true today when you're looking at grant money. They of course would rather use it for fire trucks and things like that which don't have a continuing life. Same way with the legislature. But some of it did go into those kinds of programs.

**GB:** Do we still have a lot of programs around today that owe something to the Model Cities?

**JO:** Well I think the childcare probably is the best example. The money that went in to providing not only good training for staff but to subsidize low income people so that their kids could be in day care so that those people could work. I mean, it was really a Head Start program in many ways, and some of that money went into Head Start. The whole Portland west as it exists today, I mean there is a Portland west committee or whatever, neighborhood asso-, whatever you want to call it, that does the Americorps program and so forth. That was the old Model Cities program, all of that stuff that goes on in Portland west. Because that was the model area, it wasn't the whole city of Portland, it was like the western part of the peninsula. So you had, up around the Maine Medical Center, which we called the gold coast in those days, so you had some affluent citizens living in that district plus you had all the low-income areas, the elderly high rise areas. So it was a very diversified chunk of Portland, if you will, and the money had to be spent in that area, it couldn't be spent any place else in Portland.

**GB:** How did the wealthier citizens of Portland see this project?

**JO:** Many of them served on the committees. Dr. Phil Thompson, I think of him, from the west end. Ida Leiter whose husband is a physician and she is a nurse, she was very active. They, because I was on the health task force, they were very helpful, both Mercy and Maine Medical Center, because they were both located in the district, were very supportive. So, and it was great because you needed those people, you needed the low income people as well but you needed some of those people that had the expertise to know what could be done and what couldn't be done.

**GB:** I see. What was, what kind of advice did you get from the low-income members of the committee, what sorts of things did they say they wanted the city to -?

**JO:** Other than telling me to drop dead?

**GB:** Were they kind of -?

**JO:** Some of them were. And for some it was very difficult. I mean, in those days, you know, you'd pay for them to come to the meeting, you paid for their babysitters, you paid for their transportation. We did a lot to make it, to enable them to participate because otherwise they couldn't have come, you know. They didn't have anybody to leave the kids with and that sort of thing. So there was a lot of hand holding but I think that that was helpful, and I know that several of them went on to play active roles in the community, you know, from what they had learned through participating in a, quote, democratic process, if you will. So, but you know, I'm sure they always thought they ought to get more money or whatever.

**GB:** I see. All right. All right, I might come back to the Model Cities but for the moment we'll move on to some other topics. You mentioned that you had worked for Peter Kyros at some point, when was that?

**JO:** Right after Model, no, let me see, before Model Cities.

**GB:** Before Model Cities.

**JO:** Before Model Cities? I have to stop to think. I have to think of the right time. I worked for Peter '68, I was at Westbrook College, I left Westbrook in '68 and worked for Peter through one election cycle. And then, then I went to Model Cities, and then from Model Cities I ran for congress against Peter.

**GB:** I see. So what were you doing when you were working for him?

**JO:** I directed the district office here in Portland, in the Federal Building, small office. He had, it was really the only office he had. Today a congressional member would have two or three. He had the one in the Federal Building. And Jerry Plant from Old Orchard worked there, and a secretary, and then a series of interns would go through it. And like any congressional office, when the congressman was in the district we were the chauffeurs and the schedulers and the drivers and all that. And then when we put him on the airplane to go back to Washington we'd call his staff and say, he's coming back to you.

Constituent work, no, I had no idea what people would call a congressional office for. I had, one of my first calls was a woman who told me that the light in her kitchen didn't work, and I thought, oh that's too bad, I wonder what I do with this little lady. So I suggested nicely that she call Central Maine Power, which she evidently did and then she called me back. What she hadn't told me the first time around was, Peter Kyros was her landlord. That's why she was calling him, not because he was a congressman. What I learned was many people didn't know, and it's still true today, if you got a problem do you go to your local city councilor, do you go to your state legislator, or do you go to your federal member of congress. Because, you know, they're three distinct bodies of government if you will. But, did a lot of constituent work, did a lot of interaction with all of the other federal agencies.

I can remember Togus, the Veteran's Hospital, you know, if somebody wanted to get somebody

into Togus you'd call up and they'd say, I'm sorry, we got a long waiting list. You'd call up and say, this is the congressman's office and I have somebody I'd like to get into Togus. Have him here tomorrow morning. I mean, you realized the power of that of-, not just because it was Peter, but of a congressional office. To be able to pick up the phone and make things happen. I mean, it did, it worked.

Apart from that, however, I had a very unhappy relationship with Peter. He was not personally a very likeable guy and I didn't think he served the people very well, and therefore ran against him. Knowing that I was running against an incumbent which, you know, what, nine percent of non-incumbents win. I mean, I knew it was an uphill fight. And the press unfortunately made a lot of the fact that I had worked for him, and therefore it was sour grapes or something like that. If he had been around today he probably wouldn't have survived as long as he did in congress. He drank and he womanized, brought his women here with him. A number of staff simply quit over that whole issue, you know, they wouldn't deal with it. But anyhow, it was a great experience working in the office.

**GB:** Did he get away with all those behaviors, did people kind of not notice?

**JO:** Yeah, he was in a bad accident in Washington, which the press wrote up but nothing ever happened, you know. Took a couple of cars out and he'd been drinking. Yeah, you know, brought, well, and was married all of this time, brought a woman with him, when he came from Washington. Brought her to Portland, you know, put her up in the local motel. We kept saying, you know, do what you want down there, just don't bring them home here, you know, you got to run for reelection. Anyhow, I mean that aside, and, you know, this is kind of off the record because that ought not to have anything to do with it, but it was a great experience.

I liked, it, in fact it helped me greatly when I went for my master's degree because there was a time gap between the time I got my bachelor's because I did it all through continuing education, and then I went to get my master's in public administration. And believe it or not, a lot of the experience I had in the congressional office was what saved my hide on that exam because I just knew some of that basic stuff.

**GB:** I see, so did, what were some important issues, do you remember, or what kind of issues you were getting calls from people on when you were working for Kyros?

**JO:** Oh, my Social Security check didn't come on time, you know, we talked about trying to get into Togus, same thing I'm sure congressional offices are getting today. You'd get one or two or three kooks, you know, who just come and visit every office and you never told them the right thing and you always thought you wanted to have somebody else around because this person's a little weird. But you know, any agency, any federal agency that they would, that somebody have to deal with. Income tax, veterans, you know, just general congressional stuff.

**GB:** I see, I see. So you ran, you then ran against Kyros in the '74 election, what would have been in the primaries?

**JO:** Yeah.

**GB:** Okay.

**JO:** I got beaten two to one.

**GB:** Well, as you say, he was an incumbent.

**JO:** But it was a great experience. I'm never going to do it again, but it was a great experience. I did it for fifteen thousand dollars, which of course would be unheard of today because I lost. I didn't have a debt, you know, which most candidates would have coming out of it today. Met a lot of wonderful people, saw a lot of the first district, was in places I'd never been before.

It was a disadvantage to have been a woman. The only woman prior to that had been Margaret Chase Smith, and people remembered her and they'd say to me, you know, if Margaret Chase Smith can do it you can do it. But I had people who refused to shake my hand because I was a woman. I had women who, women, who told me I belonged at home with my children. It was before Olympia, well before Susan [Susan Margaret Collins] of course, so it was not an advantage to have been a woman. They thought I was somebody's wife, you know, when I'd do my little campaigning door-to-door, whatever. Tough to raise money, well, that was tough because I was running against an incumbent and of course he got all the PAC money and I didn't. But it was a great experience.

**GB:** Who did you have working for you?

**JO:** I could have, I should have kept, if I was going to do it I should have run again because the next, he, that's when David Emery, David beat Peter that year, the year after I did it. No, he beat him that, in the general election the Republican won, David Emery, and then the next time around it was a free for all in terms of Democrats running. And of course the only time you're going to get somebody like David is the first time out.

Who was involved in my campaign? John O'Leary, who had worked for Peter, did some of my speeches; Jean Childs was my campaign chair; Kenny Wexler, who's a name not familiar to you, was my finance person. Just a lot of great people all around the state.

**GB:** I see. Now, on the issue of being a woman running in that campaign, I have a note here that you were the first woman in Maine to use just your last name and news stories that (*unintelligible phrase*)?

**JO:** Oh God, yes, oh yes, I had a horrible time with the paper. *Time* magazine had just changed theirs so that on second reference they would say, O'Brien said. Well, the paper here wouldn't do that, you know, it would have to be, I got them to use Ms. but it would have to be Ms. O'Brien or Jadine O'Brien said. But, you know, they'd say Kyros said, I mean they'd use him, just his last name in the second reference. So yeah, it was a battle. Well, I mean they just weren't used to it.

**GB:** All right, so after that '74 campaign, where did you go from there?

**JO:** Where did I go after that '74 campaign? I went to work at the Center for Community Dental Health, which is a nonprofit still in existence, serves low-income children and adults with dental services. Had a clinic here, had a clinic in Biddeford, ran the clinic at Pineland, a poverty program basically. They had a one-year grant. They did a lot of school dental health education in the schools. We had dental health educators who went out and worked in schools. Great program, still going strong today.

**GB:** And how long did you, were you involved in that?

**JO:** I worked there until '79 when I went to work for Joe Brennan.

**GB:** Okay, tell me about working for Joe Brennan. You had known him before, right?

**JO:** I'd known him before, I did not apply. My good friend, former city manager John Menario called me one day. John was working on the transition team with Brennan going in and wanted to know why I hadn't applied, and I said, "Well, you know, I just hadn't thought much about it, John." "Well," he says, "we're looking for a few good women." I don't know if he said few, but he was, they, at that point they'd hired probably half the staff and had no women. And John certainly knew they had to have a woman.

So I said, well talk to me about it. And he said, "Well, how about the Dept. of Human Services?" "Oh, John, everybody in the world wants that, Michael Petite wanted it, Tom Lapointe wanted it, I'm not interested in getting into that (*unintelligible word*) with those guys." Well, the lottery, did I want to be the chairman of the lottery? Well, no, I didn't think I wanted to be. So anyhow he said, put a resume together and send it in. So they finally offered me commissioner of personnel. It's been reorganized since then but that's what it was then, human resources. So I said, yeah, went to work for him, worked for him for five years, so.

It was a great experience, I think the world of Joe and still do today and had a good time doing it. Except I had, well I lived up there. I was going to say I had to commute but I bought a condo so that I stayed up during the week. Leave here Monday morning, go up, work the week and then come back on Friday night.

**GB:** So you were director of personnel within the, within his staff?

**JO:** Yeah, I was a member of his cabinet, the cabinet probably was sixteen, eighteen members. And at the time there were two women in his cabinet, and I don't think it ever got to be more than that. At that point in state government there were a number of women at the next level, people like Trish Riley, Pat Ryan, you know, that weren't commissioners but.

It was still, it was still early and I have to say Joe wasn't always comfortable with women particularly (*unintelligible word*). He had a small cadre of real close buddies, if you will, and I mean I was a woman and I was still different, you know. But he was a great guy, I mean his theory was, he picked you, you did the job, he rarely questioned you as long as the job got done.

**GB:** So what was going on during that time, during Brennan's governorship, what sorts of things were going on in the state?

**JO:** What was going on during that, good God, who remembers? I'm sure they were doing a budget. Well, of course George Mitchell got appointed to the senate during that time, Indian Lands Claim must have been a big issue during that time, Democrats were in control, and he followed Longley. I mean, we had presumed that George Mitchell was going to of course be governor. And I remember being at the Eastland Hotel on the night of George's election, happened to be with Tom Jones who's a photographer at *Maine Times* who was stringing for *Time Magazine*. He got a call and said get your fanny to Lewiston because that's where the winner lives, and of course that was Longley. So, I mean, that shot those dreams right down the tube.

But in all of this, if you went back to where you're coming from with Muskie, you can see the involvement I would have had through not only local politics. Because of course he was the epitome, he was the leader of the Democratic Party all of that time, through a federally funded program where, you know, he was important, through a congressional staff member, my interactions with his staff people. I mean, in many cases you would go to the senior senator from the state if you couldn't get it done at a lowly congressional level. So, I mean, I worked with people like Ginny Pitts and Gail Corey and some of his long time staff members.

And of course we went to all the functions, we went to the caucuses, we went to the convention where he always would be. We've heard, we used to be able to do most of Muskie's speeches probably. You know, he'd talk about five years ago and then pretty soon he'd be talking about ten years ago, then pretty soon he was talking about fifteen years ago. His speeches seemed to get a little longer. However, he doesn't hold the record, Hubert Humphrey holds the record. Spoke in Bangor at the convention more than one hour. I mean, I've never heard a convention speaker, he'd get, you'd think he was going to wrap up, you know, he'd get right there to the big crescendo, he'd go on, and then lead to, it was like. But Muskie certainly held his own in terms of talking, you know.

**GB:** Was he at least interesting to listen to for you?

**JO:** He was, he was. Once you'd heard him, I mean it's like, George Mitchell. I'd heard him enough and even when I had my job at Blue Cross we used to do a lot of stuff in Washington and we'd get George to be the speaker at the breakfast or whatever. I can remember saying to his staff one day, George has got to get new jokes. And they said to me, you tell him, we're not telling him. Because, you know, he's got great jokes and every time he opens his mouth I think, I think I've heard this one. So, you know, with Muskie there was still some of that, you know, you'd heard some of it but, but he's still the grand old man so you're still listening.

*End of Side A*  
*Side B*

**JO:** . . . also nice with Muskie to get favors done. We went to the World's Fair in Montreal



and got in, didn't have to stand, I mean my kids were young, I don't know when this was, whenever the World's Fair was in Montreal, you figure it out. Got in preferred lines, didn't have to stand in long lines because you'd call the senator's office and he got you some kind of a pass.

We went to the Army-Navy game twice, I'd always wanted to go an Army-Navy game. We went twice, Muskie got us the tickets. You know, it was that kind of thing that was done, I mean, that kind of, when you, when you've worked in that milieu of political activity it was normal to ask. And as a staff person, or even not, as an active Democrat you were, you were going to get some of those perks.

We took our kids to Washington when our children were little, well little, I'm going to guess maybe five and seven or four and someplace in there, and did the things you do with kids. I was going on business and then we did a personal trip, and went to Muskie's office. He couldn't have been nicer to my children, I mean, gave them something, I don't know, Joy might even remember what it was, but you know, gave them a souvenir. And of course you know how tall Muskie was so, I mean, to my kids who were probably this high, you know, he looked like a giant I'm sure. So he was always gracious to them.

Opened their house in Kennebunkport, that wonderful place where they had a lot of lobster bakes on his front lawn. Jane, I would also mention, was a wonderful hostess. Jane did far better, Jane would remember my name. Ed Muskie, in all those years, probably knew he knew me, but couldn't remember. I mean, it's like Jack, couldn't remember his name, Jane did. I mean, she was kind of, I wouldn't call her the power behind the throne but she was very good at remembering people and being gracious and making the connection. When he was, it must have been when he was a candidate for vice president; something was going on at the airport. He must have been coming in, and I for some reason was in charge of the family and getting them passes and getting them through Secret Service and all of that. And I can remember, and his kids were relatively young then, and how great Jane was. And I think his mother may still have been alive at that point. So those are, you know, some of the, I also went to the convention in '68.

**GB:** Oh, did you?

**JO:** So if I could, as a political guru, if I could only have been at one national convention, I picked the right one. I was an alternate, I wasn't a delegate, and that must have been '68, yeah, '68.

**GB:** I recall now your husband telling me that you were there.

**JO:** I can remember calling home and, because they were all on the Cape, my family was all on Cape Cod because it was August, and my mother wanting to know if I was all right. I said, of course I'm all right, I'm having a wonderful time, you know, Mayor Daley's put out this red carpet for us. Well, she had been watching of course the television where she saw the rioting in the park and so forth. We saw none of that. I mean, we'd be put on our buses at the motel, we'd be taken to the convention hall. They did, I remember they went through our persons or our bags or anything we were carrying were checked at the door, that's the only thing I, never saw anything. Except, there was Hubert Humphrey and Ed Muskie on the stage, you know, it was great.

**GB:** That must have been quite exciting when he was nominated.

**JO:** It was, yes, it was, yeah. And as I say, if I can only go to one I picked the right one to go to. Except he didn't win, but anyhow.

**GB:** So what did you do from day to day at the convention?

**JO:** I don't even remember. I can remember a party at the hotel where we stayed, with whatever other state. Some other state was staying in the same place where we were staying. I can remember going, it's not the shipyard, the cow yard, wherever the, they serve meat and the, the stockyards, I mean there's a big restaurant. Of course I was working for the congressman at the time so even though I was an alternate on my own, I can remember going there. He needed reservations and he needed special seating, I mean I spent a lot of time doing that, but it's too far. I mean, I can remember Muskie coming in early one morning to a meeting of the Maine delegation. We were in somebody's hotel suite I presume because I can remember standing around in a crowded room and Muskie coming and talking with us, as he would do, from Maine.

**GB:** I see. Do you recall the first time that you met Muskie?

**JO:** No.

**GB:** Don't remember where that was?

**JO:** No, he was just always there. I mean, he was such a part, you know, and we really haven't had that kind of leader since. Well George to a degree, you know. Who's the head of the Democrats, I mean who's the titular head if you will? I mean, it's not Tom Allen and John Baldacci, they just don't make that cut as to where Muskie was. I mean he was just a grand old man. I don't have the foggiest, when I met him.

**GB:** So, but you had some encounters with him when you were working for Model Cities, is that right?

**JO:** He would have been, it was, I can remember, it came out of the, out of Washington at the time he was there. I think it was Lyndon Johnson's program, as a matter of fact, when it began. So I'm sure we had contact with that office. But had we had problems we would have but we didn't have problems. I mean the money came and we handled it pretty well and, I don't remember his coming to tour or anything like that, though. But I'm sure I always felt that if we needed help he was there.

**GB:** I'm going to change veins here. You mentioned your children, what are their names?

**JO:** Joy and Jill

**GB:** All right. And I understand that Joy has been involved in politics as well.

**JO:** Yeah.

**GB:** What has she done?

**JO:** She is now secretary of the senate, the Maine senate, a position she's held for about twenty years, minus two in which, her job depends on the Democrats being in control in the Maine senate because the Democrats in the senate elect her, and for two of those years the Republicans were in control. Very unhappy two years, I might add. So, you know, it's (*unintelligible word*), she runs the senate. She has a staff of about twenty-five people. She does the schedule, the calendar, the program for the day, the pages, the, the whole nine yards. It's an elective position within the party, if you will. And she's been very fortunate.

She, her background, she went to New England College in Henniker, New Hampshire, dropped out in her junior year, went back a couple of years later on her own, got a, an internship with the speaker of the New Hampshire legislature who interestingly enough was a Republican, and then got a fellowship for one year after she graduated. Then she worked in the New Hampshire legislature and came from the New Hampshire legislature to the Maine legislature. So there's kind of direct correlation with her political science background in college and what she's doing today.

So, and you know, I mean, in this household politics were lived and breathed. When all of my kids and my kids' friends turned eighteen years of age, they sat at my kitchen table and they registered to vote or they didn't come again. When we needed bodies at caucuses we'd round up those kids and we'd get those kids to go to the caucus because they were votes. We had politicians come through here. Jack probably told you, he drove the van for Hubert Humphrey's son, his son was here for a fund raiser.

**GB:** I don't think he told me that.

**JO:** Well, his, Hubert whatever, what was his name, it wasn't Hubert, he's now whatever he is in whatever state. What state did Hubert come from, Minnesota? He was touring on behalf of his father in a big van of some kind, mobile home van. And he got this far, did a fund raiser here at this house, and then he flew home and Jack drove it back down to Washington. And we still have vice president cocktail napkins that came out of that van. My kids used to say, though, however many politicians we had through here, most of them would lose. And they would say, Mum, don't have any more parties because every time you have a party for somebody they lose. This is in the years when Democrats weren't popular, you know, what can I say?

But, you know, Bill Hathaway's been an old friend, and I have to say to Angus King. And I've said this to him when Angus was campaigning, of course he was running against Joe Brennan, so when I took him through Blue Cross to meet employees he said something in front of our management team about he knew that I was supporting Joe Brennan. And I said to him afterwards, yup, I am. And I said, I remember you Angus when you were a Democrat and you're still a Democrat today. But he chose to run as an independent because he couldn't have beaten Joe as a Democrat, so.

But, you know that's, that's the kind of flow in this household in terms of, we've done it for local candidates. I've told Joe Brannigan who's running this time for the legislature, who's a neighbor. This is a very political neighborhood, by the way. Mary (*name*) lives over here, she was a state senator. Joe Brannigan lives on the street behind us, he was a state senator. Jerry Talbot, who was the first black member of the legislature and his wife live just down the street, so there's something in the water in this neighborhood that makes (*unintelligible phrase*). And we've enjoyed it obviously, you know.

I think my kids have been exposed to wonderful people and wonderful ideas. My Jill was not involved at all, and when she got, she lives in Atlanta. When she comes back I think she feels a little left out because clearly the conversation with Joy, or Jack or me, you know, is always political. I mean, for the last sixteen years I've lobbied in the state legislature, you know, I've lived and breathed state government if you will. So, you know, it's a natural.

I can remember being so honored in Augusta on Law Day, which I think is May 1st if I'm not mistaken. They had asked Muskie, who was then retired, to be the speaker at Law Day and I, don't ask me when but this is sometime in the eighties, okay. They get him up there to be the speaker at Law Day in the legislature, and Nancy Chandler who at that time was president, no, who was the executive director of the Maine Lawyers whatever, the Maine Bar Foundation, asked me if I would mind giving Muskie a ride back to the airport. I said, would I mind giving Senator Muskie a ride in my car, just me and him?

I had a great big old Pontiac convertible at the time and luckily it was a seat that would push back, because he was such a big guy? Is he going to fit in my car, is my car going to break down between here and the airport? But we had just a wonderful time. Of course he slept part of the way, from Freeport he fell asleep. But it was great to have him, to talk about his family, his kids, what they were doing at that point in time. And as I say, that's, well, it's still twenty years ago but it seems like yesterday.

And then more recently he spoke to a joint convention in the legislature. It's been within ten years, I mean a big event, and they did a big splash at the State House. And I, he and Jane sat on the third floor in the little rotunda area to have pictures taken, and it was a wonderful day. I mean it's the kind of reminiscent day, you know, he got up there on that podium and he kind of just talked. But, I mean that's the kind of figure of the person that he was. And even, I mean Republicans, Democrats, whoever, you know, wanted to be part of it, wanted to have their picture taken with him, wanted to be able to say hello to him. You know, it was a great occasion.

**GB:** All right. So, so Muskie was always very pleasant when you encountered him?

**JO:** Well most of the time. I do remember, it was in Bangor and it must have been at a convention. Late in the evening in, I would guess it was a function room. He was a little testy. I don't even remember what it was about but I can remember seeing, I mean he's famous for a temper. I can remember seeing a little bit of that temper. He liked a drink or two, he liked it better when somebody else bought that drink or two, but you know, that's natural.

I mean today I don't even hesitate, well, it's more difficult today with the laws that are out there,

you know, you never think twice about buying a drink. I wouldn't for a legislator, let alone for a state senator or a U.S. congressman or a U.S. senator, you know, it was a natural to buy him drinks. But he liked to drink and he had a bit of a temper.

But I didn't, I have to say I only remember once when it's like, back off, I don't think I want to be part of whatever was going on. But they tell wonderful old stories. I mean I'm sure you're going to talk to other people who can tell far better stories than I can.

**GB:** So was he, I'm curious about this time when he seemed a little bit testy, was -?

**JO:** It was late at night, oh, it was, you know, it had to be. It was after everything had taken place at the convention.

**GB:** Now, was he, oh, so this was at the convention?

**JO:** It was in Bangor. And it was one of the conventions in Bangor and it was back afterwards in, it wasn't in somebody's room but it may have been in the bar, or it may have been in a, I don't know.

**GB:** So was it kind of intimidating to see this kind of giant in your party, well, I suppose, you know, literally and figuratively, kind of -?

**JO:** No, probably not. Because I suppose anybody sooner or later gets mean or nasty at somebody. And I don't know, I don't know what triggered it. I don't even remember, but I do remember that, you know, well maybe I saw a bit of the Muskie temper (*unintelligible word*).

**GB:** All right, all right. Now, there were some names that you brought up that I'd like to ask you a little bit about, perhaps about their personalities or your involvement with them or any stories you might have about them that would illustrate their character or what they did. First off, Bill Hathaway.

**JO:** Bill Hathaway, Bill Hathaway was a terrible speaker when he began, when he first ran for congress. Oh my God, it was, it was heart wrenching to listen to him give a speech. But like all of them, they came a very long ways, he became very good. His daughter lived with us one summer, so we felt probably a little closer to him than some of the others. And we went to her wedding, which I remember my kids were, both went with us.

I was, during my tenure at Blue Cross and Blue Shield one of the things I did for a while was to go to Washington and visit with members of congress. And I always used to like to sit, it was while George was in the senate, I used to like to sit in the chamber, in the balcony at the senate and just. I mean I'm just a groupie. I love to watch the senate. I can remember coming out of the Capitol, coming out of the United States Capitol, going to walk across the park and who comes across in front of me but Bill Hathaway. I mean now, I ask you, it was when he was serving on the Maritime commission at that point in time. Good sense of humor, nice guy.

I can remember working on his last campaign when he got beaten, making those telephone calls

and just knowing as I made those calls, he wasn't going to win. Just from the response, you know, you get. And I kept thinking, I hope they don't have anybody working this phone who really is going to be crestfallen when they hear the kind of things I've heard. I mean, I was at that point realistic enough to know, you know, not going to win.

**GB:** What sorts of things were you hearing from people?

**JO:** I don't even remember now, but you know, you had a, you had your set of questions that you were, you know, you had your program. You were asking the questions, and I presume, you know, if you were to vote today would you vote for X or Y, and X was Bill, and they were going to vote for Y. Just one of those things, I mean when you've been involved as long as I have and done those ad nauseam phone calls to people out of the phone book, it just wasn't a very good feeling, you know?

**GB:** Was there something he had done as a senator, or was there something politically that people were discontented with?

**JO:** I don't think so. He was always his own person. What did he, what, I can, I'd have to struggle. I can remember there was something, block grants comes to mind, and the city of Portland was very interested in block grants. You know, grants that come with no strings attached. And I think, and I, you shouldn't be quoting me on this one, I think Bill was against block grants. But there was something out there that, you know, we really wanted to. But he was a man of his word and that's what he felt. He didn't think they were good and he wasn't going to vote for them. But he was a good guy.

**GB:** I see, which election was that?

**JO:** God, I don't know which election it was. If I had kept, if I got all my old political buttons out, I don't even remember that. But he got beaten, how's that?

**GB:** Well, I can find out, I can find out for sure on that one.

**JO:** You ought to bring a little chart with you and say, okay, these are the years and this is who was in and, you know.

**GB:** That wouldn't be a bad idea, just to have kind of a chronology to help.

**JO:** Yeah, yeah, because then I could say well this is where I fit in, here, you know?

**GB:** Some things I know (*unintelligible word*) Bill Hathaway is one that I haven't heard a lot about so I'm not that familiar with all of his, with his tenure.

**JO:** Yeah, he was at, for example he was at Angus' inauguration. This, when, the first term when Angus was inaugurated. Bill sat on the platform. Bill and Mary Hathaway were guests because Angus had worked for Bill, that's how, well, he had worked, he came to Maine before that. That was his first job, that's how I first met Angus, we met a long time ago.

**GB:** And that kind of shows Angus King's Democratic roots as you were mentioning before. You think he's really a Democrat?

**JO:** Yeah, and I think he, I think, you know, if you watch him in the legislature I think he favors the Democrats. In fact it's easy to tell because Republicans don't like him. A lot of Democrats don't like him either, but I think he's more apt to favor the Democrats, so. You know, he's got that liberal bent, and his wife certainly has.

**GB:** I see. All right, what about Ralph Amergian?

**JO:** I don't remember much about Ralph. Ralph ran a grocery store and he was part of the Armenian community here. And there was a fairly, was then and still is, a fairly active Armenian community. They don't have a church here but they had, they used to do an Armenian dance every year which was like the sellout premier thing to go to, I mean you had to have a table, you had to be able to do Greek dancing or Armenian dancing, which are very much the same. And he was very much a part of that. But, and he and Harold Long were of the same vintage on the city council.

**GB:** Okay, all right. What about Bob Masterson? Masterston, Masterton, okay.

**JO:** Masterton. Well, Bob was president of the Maine Savings Bank, he's dead now. His wife Nancy still lives in Cape Elizabeth. There's a building at the University of Maine named for him. He was a businessman, one of the movers and shakers of the community at that period of time when Portland was moving and shaking. And Bob would be on a, you know, if you were looking to raise money, for example today if you were looking to raise money for the symphony, Bob would probably be on the committee, or for the art museum or something like that. Nice guy. His wife served in the legislature. Nancy was a Republican legislator, house member.

**GB:** I see. Okay, what about John O'Leary?

**JO:** Oh, John O'Leary's one of my very favorite people, my very favorite people. That ambassador to Chile. David went to Yale and, I mean John went to Yale and David Flanagan from CMP went to Harvard, and they both worked for Peter during the summer when they were out of college. So we had the Harvard-Yale, you know, rivalry all of the time between those two colleges.

But I, John O'Leary would come into Peter's office in the morning and, with a bottle of milk and a newspaper. And Peter would have left a message that he wanted a speech on air pollution. John would go in and shut the door, with his bottle of milk and the morning paper, and two hours later come out with the most glorious speech, all done, all researched, all put together, and send it off to Washington. Just a bright guy.

He was part of that young, the teenage Democrats that I talked about, when those kids were sixteen, seventeen. I mean, they were high school addicts then, I mean Democratic addicts. He was a friend of Peter's and Earle Shettleworth, I mean all of that crowd kind of went together.

John went on to become, he comes from a big family, he became an attorney here in Portland, married a young woman from South America and they have two wonderful daughters, Gabriella and, oh, now I can't think of the other name.

Anyhow, was tapped by Bill Clinton, was Bill, was a big supporter of Bill Clinton from days at Yale. And when Bill Clinton first came to Maine, I got invited to the luncheon at the Holiday Inn downtown and I'm sure I was on the list because of John's connection. And when I got there John came up to me and he said, ask him a question about abortion. I said, okay John, because you know you're not asking me to ask that question unless he's going to answer it right. So I did, I mean that was my question. I was told by John to ask the question and I asked it, and I got the right answer.

So then he obviously was posted by Clinton to be ambassador to Chile, and it's a wonderful opportunity for John because of course his wife comes from South America. They're there, they had a, he also summers on Little Diamond Island so we had that kind of island connection. He's had cancer and has come through it, we hope safely and successfully. And just a wonderful guy, very bright, young man, very active politically, very astute, good guy.

**GB:** And you also just mentioned David Flanagan, what about him?

**JO:** David Flanagan grew up just down the street. David Flanagan likes to tell people he came from Bangor. Well if he came from Bangor he moved here at a very early age. He comes from a large family, too, and there was always somebody knocking on our door looking for money. If it wasn't band boosters, it was the swimming club or it was Girl Scout cookies; one of the Flanagan kids were always peddling something. His father and mother still live down the street.

He, too, is a very bright guy. He ended up being Joe Brennan's legal counsel when Joe was in the governor's office. So, you know, watched over Joe and made sure everything was done legally. Went from there to CMP and made one ton of money.

Was considering, I don't know if he still is, running for governor next time around, talking at one point about running as an independent. I had a little chat with him at one point when I saw him and said, don't do that. I might like you David but I don't like you as an independent, you got to run as a Democrat.

**GB:** It's starting to become a trend in Maine, *(unintelligible phrase)*.

**JO:** So, I don't know, I don't know if he will or not. I mean, you know, you got the Baldaccis of the world and the Shelly *(name)* but I think it'll be a free for all, the next Democratic gubernatorial candidates anyhow. So, but yeah, David's a good guy.

**GB:** So since working for Brennan you've been a lobbyist for Blue Cross/Blue Shield?

**JO:** Yes, I went from Brennan to Blue Cross, because of course when you serve at the pleasure of any governor you're only there as long as the governor's there and then you've all got to come back. And there were a slew of us from Portland working for the governor and I thought, I'm



going to start looking because, you know, I want to be ahead of the pack when they all come back to Portland.

So I saw the job advertised in the paper and I didn't know that it was a lobbyist job at the time. The way it was described certainly didn't say lobbyist. And it was a new position at Blue Cross. My boss then, who died a short time later, I think had the vision to know that he could not-. He used to do whatever had to be done in the legislature and in those days, this is now what year are we, '84, they tracked ten bills maybe in the course of a year. But he did that along with, he was vice president of public relations, so he did that along with (*unintelligible phrase*). So he set up a new position and then he (*unintelligible phrase*) I got the position. And it's turned, it has turned into, it evolved into a full time legislative lobby position, and that's all I did day in and day out every day of the year was work with state legislators.

**GB:** Really, wow. So what's the typical day in the life of a Blue Cross/Blue Shield lobbyist?

**JO:** Typical day, okay, get there, get to the State House an hour before session begins. If session begins at nine, which means they're in the chamber, lobbyist ought to be there at eight because that's the window of opportunity when you can get a hold of them. Grab them, talk to them, and you stay until they've gone home. And the committee of jurisdiction for me was the banking and insurance committee. So you're in that committee every day they meet, usually three times a week in the afternoon, again sitting there all day. I tracked a hundred and fifty bills probably in the first regular session. This is bills that we either testify in in support of or opposed, or at least monitored, didn't speak on all of them.

I knew or do know currently every one of the one hundred and eighty-six members of the Maine legislature, can tell you most of what you want to know and a lot that you don't want to know about them. In, if I were still doing it, this summer which is the summer before the election, I would be going around meeting with all of those candidates running in open seats where there's no incumbent. Because you don't want to ruffle the incumbent's feathers to think that you might even like their opponent. So I would probably meet fifty or sixty candidates over the summer, half of whom are going to win.

So I'm that far ahead of the game when the legislature convenes. I mean I know them, I recognize them, I can call them by name, I've been in their homes, I've been in their places of business, I've been in some wonderful places. I've been in bars, I've been in funeral homes, I've been in factories to meet candidates. Met their spouses, met their families. It has been an enormous advantage and I'm one of the few if only lobbyist doing that kind of thing.

And that's because I work full time for a company that's allowed me to do that. Most lobbyists are contracted either just for the legislative session or for one client or something like that. I've worked for a company that said this is important. Also, they have our coverage. State employees, including legislators, have Blue Cross health insurance because they get it for nothing. That's a tremendous advantage, too, to say you're going to have our coverage. I'm here to help you with constituent work, half of your constituents, because we cover half the state, have Blue Cross coverage. If they come to you wanting to know why you denied a, why we denied a claim or why we don't cover something, I'm happy to provide that service to you, and

that's worked very well for us.

**GB:** I would imagine.

**JO:** Yes, it really has, yeah.

**GB:** Wow, so, that's quite a job. So you've had to, did I get you right that you have to be familiar with just about every legislator in -?

**JO:** You don't have to because in the end the only people I really have to know are the thirteen members of the banking and insurance committee. That's where I have to make my first cut. If I don't want a bill, I want to kill it with those thirteen members. If I want it I have to get a pass for those thirteen numbers. But if I'm not successful, I have to go on to the next level. For most lobbyists the next level is not the house where there are a hundred and fifty one people, the next level is the state senate where there are thirty-five members. That's countable, I can go in there with an issue, if I've done my job right and I've talked to all thirty five, I ought to be able to count my vote before the vote's taken. You can't do that in the house. So that's where, most lobbyists will spend most of their time in the senate.

But, it also entailed a one hundred mile, you know, fifty miles up and fifty miles back every day, especially during the winter months. And I've been doing it sixteen years, it was just time. I'm still on contract, I'm working with, in fact that's where I was this morning. I do the, we have a political action committee, a PAC. It's a small PAC, I like to call it a snack PAC because we don't have a lot of money to give out, but I'm the one who coordinates where our money goes. We have an advisory committee. I prepare the material for the advisory committee to make their decisions based on the material I put together. So we gave out another five hundred dollars this morning in an hour's worth of time, and we still probably have got a little more to go. This was our third round of meetings in giving out money. And they've got me on contract until that goes through and until they hire somebody to take my place.

**GB:** So these political action committees kind of organize funds and the distribution of funds?

**JO:** In our case we can solicit money from our management memb-, from our management employees. So anybody from a director level above, directors, vice presidents or presidents can be solicited for payroll deduction, just like you'd give to the United Way you give to the PAC. It comes out of your paycheck and this builds up into a little kitty where we probably had when we began five thousand dollars to give out to candidates who support us, or we hope would support us in the future.

**GB:** I see, wow, that's interesting. All right, I just have a couple of questions left. First off, about the Model Cities, something I just remembered I had wanted to ask you. Henry Bourgeois who ran the Lewiston, ran the Lewiston operation. Did you work closely with him, did you kind of bounce ideas off of each other with the Lewiston people?

**JO:** No, we'd talk once in a while. Our program was much better than theirs, you see. I mean we got more money, I do remember that, so we were a bigger program than they were. I don't

know why they got it, really, to begin with. But, you know, once in a while I had some contact. But it's interesting because where Henry's ended up, in the Maine Development Foundation, I still have some contact with him, and we chuckle about having worked together all those many years ago.

**GB:** Did the programs differ drastically that you know of, did he run his program differently than you did, are you aware?

**JO:** I don't know. I would not think so, I mean the structure was pretty much the same, you know. We had what they called task forces around areas of concern. I'm sure they must have had the same thing. They had, probably had an education task force and they had a health task force. I don't know that but I'm going to guess they were pretty much the same.

**GB:** I see, okay, and finally, from a very broad perspective, have you seen a lot of changes in the Democratic Party or in the dynamic of politics in general in the state in the past few decades?

**JO:** Well, I think, I think I said earlier, I think parties mean less. And I don't know what I can say to back that up. But it's just a feeling that there used to be more cohesiveness in starting at the local level in, you know, your local committee. If it was active, you know, then you fed into the county committee and, if it was active, then, you know, you fed into the big state committee. Today I couldn't even tell you who's on the state committee. I couldn't tell you who's on the coun-, I couldn't, well we are members of the city committee, and Jack because he's a county elected official keeps in contact with the county committee.

But that's part of age, too. I mean, we were active when we began. So there may, you know, if you were to ask this of somebody who's thirty, thirty-five years of age they might say, yeah, there's great activity out there. But in this day and age it's simply harder to get volunteers. It's harder to get people to spend time, I mean, going door to door to register people, you know, doing the telephone calls, you know. More women working so you've got less volunteers. It used to be, I mean, you'd go into a phone bank someplace it would be all women making phone calls, you know? They're just not as available.

So, and I think, at least in the legislature I've seen the lines blur somewhat. I mean, you've got some Republicans who I think to myself, boy, that person ought to be a Democrat. You know, they're voting that way, they're liberal, they just think that way, and yet for some reason they're Republican. And then you see what's happened with the independents. I mean, unheard of. I mean who would have thought that Jim Longley out of nowhere, and he was a little bit weird when he was governor, let me tell you, succeeded as an independent. And then, you know, you've got Angus. So yeah, that alone, that whole independent thread that's been in Maine politics certainly has been a major change over the long term.

I see that with Jo [Jill] Goldthwait who's the independent senator from Bar Harbor. I can remember meeting with her, and I don't usually even bother when I go around. I wouldn't bother meeting with independent candidates, most of them aren't going to win, not worth my time. In that case, I looked at that race, I knew the Democrat, I knew the Republican, and I didn't know her. But I didn't see much strength in either the Democrat or the Republican. So I went all the

way up to Bar Harbor and had breakfast with her one morning and was very impressed. Came home and said to my Joy, who of course is Democrat, she's going to win this. And Joy pooh-poohed it. She taught at College of the Atlantic. She was a nurse in the local hospital, her husband was a banker, I mean she just had all the right connections in that community and she was bright. And she has been a wonderful independent senator.

And I said to her, why do you want to be an independent? You know, you don't belong to a party caucus, you won't get to chair a committee, I mean, you'll be a nobody. Well, Democrats invite her in their caucus, Republicans don't. She chairs a committee with a Democratic appointed, I mean the senate president appointed her, an independent, to chair a committee; very wise on his part. She's been, she's very, and she is probably one of the best senators they've got. She does her research, she does her follow through. She's survived as an independent.

But, you know, unheard of ten years ago, fifteen years ago. And I think we're going to see, you look at the list of candidates now, you've got Green Party, you've got Libertarian, you've got something called moderate independent, you've got independent, and you've got a Washington county party. I mean, come on, you talk about whether Ds and Rs have got any weight any more, and you look at how candidates are running, and there are about six or seven choices of what I want to run as. What does that tell you about the party? It tells me the Ds and the Rs aren't as strong as they used to be because otherwise you'd have them all in those two parties, and you don't. You gotta kind of have them spread all around.

**GB:** Yeah. Well, how about within the Democratic Party, have you seen any ideological changes, has it become more conservative or more liberal, or?

**JO:** It becomes more conservative as you get older. I, I have become more conservative, and I consider myself a liberal. I mean, I considered myself a long time ago a radical. I mean I've done the picket lines, I mean I was an ardent feminist, probably still am. In fact the contract, well I won't get into that. But as you get older I think all of us get a little more conservative. But I don't think that, I mean I think that's part of age.

I don't see the party; I mean those issues that have always meant something to the Democrats are still there. You know, jobs, good wages, health care, childcare, good education. Probably still of interest to the Republicans, how they fund it is different. And I went through a period, particularly with Joe Brennan and right after, where there was a lot of money, a lot of money floating around the legislature for Democrats to do good stuff. Then you went through that period when there weren't any money and there was just one nasty battle after another, either trying to hang on to what the Democrats had. Now it's beginning to look a little better again, there's a little bit of surplus there, what can be done with that. I mean, again, Republicans not wanting to start new programs that are going to get cut off when the money goes away.

But in the broad sense I don't see the philosophies of the Ds and Rs being any different. But I think from a party structure if you see people going else-, you know, running as candidates in some other party, it says to me something about they're not happy with the two parties that they've got out there. And you see the changeover, I mean I see it in the legislature where somebody ran as a Democrat and lost, comes back the next year and runs as a Republican. I

mean, come on, and peop-, and will admit one of the reasons I'm doing this is because I can't win as a Democrat. There's a guy in Lewiston, ran as a Republican, lost, he's running this time as a Democrat and says I'm doing it because I can't win as a Republican in my city. But, you know, what does that say to you about how strongly he feels about the ideals, if you will, of a party? Of course he doesn't, in this case. So, but in order to win that's what I got to do. And maybe if you want something badly enough maybe it works. I mean it worked for Angus.

**GB:** Wow. I suppose he wasn't so blatant about it, though, but.

**JO:** No, I mean, I think he was, you know, chose to be independent. He and Jesse, oh. Mary had always been, I mean, his wife had been a Democrat and he'd been a Democrat.

**GB:** Well, I'm fresh out of questions, so -

**JO:** Well, good.

**GB:** Do you have any final remarks you'd like to make, anything you'd like to add or emphasize?

**JO:** No, I was trying, since I've talked (*unintelligible phrase*) trying to think of things that were Muskie related. You know, I think of the convention, you know, and when he was nominated and what a great time that was. And just being able to be around him, I mean he was just that kind of a figure, if you will. And maybe it was, you know, he was older than I was at the time, so yeah. I just don't see anybody emerging out of the party.

I mean, I think George is wonderful and he certainly, had he chosen to stay here and been involved, I mean, he could have run for governor again. He could run, you know, we think he could run for president for crying out loud. But he's chosen not to do that. And he's not as available, you know, but he still draws a hell of a crowd when he comes, you know, and he wouldn't miss the opportunity.

I wrote, (*unintelligible phrase*) said that the first one hundred dollar fund raiser ever held in Maine was Muskie's. They're, I mean, unheard of in those days, you know. If you paid ten dollars to go to a bean supper you thought it was too extravagant. Twenty-five dollars, then, you know. Muskie dared to charge a hundred dollars to go to something. Now, thousand dollars, nothing, you know. But, and the cost has just escalated, too.

**GB:** Yeah. Great, well, thank you very much.

**JO:** Well, you're welcome.

*End of Interview*